

**Limited Amendment TRANPLAN 21 to Comply with
SAFETEA-LU: Draft Policy Statement and Supporting
Background Material**

*Task 2.1 – Consistency of TRANPLAN 21 and Planned Growth and
Economic Development Plans*

Draft Report

prepared for

Montana Department of Transportation

prepared by

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Draft Policy Statement – Consistency of *TRANPLAN 21* and Planned Growth and Economic Development Plans

SAFETEA-LU requires state Long Range Transportation Plans to promote consistency between transportation improvements and state and local planned growth and economic development patterns. This memorandum presents SAFETEA-LU requirements, elements of the *TRANPLAN 21 2002 Update* that emphasized economic analysis and coordination, a summary of selected regional growth plans from across the state, and a summary of recommended policy statements to meet the Federal requirements that support the Limited Amendment to *TRANPLAN 21*. The resulting policy statements were developed in consideration of existing MDT as well as statewide, regional, and local economic development and land use planning efforts.

■ SAFETEA-LU Requirements

The final planning rule for SAFETEA-LU revises the previous planning factor, requiring State and Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) to promote consistency between transportation improvements and planned growth and economic development patterns. Specifically, these requirements are as follows:

- **23 CFR Section 450.206(a)** – Each State shall carry out a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive statewide transportation planning process that provides for consideration and implementation of projects, strategies, and services that will address the following factors: 5) Protect and enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, improve the quality of life, and promote consistency between transportation improvements and State and local planned growth and economic development patterns.
- **23 CFR Section 450.206(b)** – Consideration of the planning factors in paragraph a) of this section shall be reflected, as appropriate, in the statewide transportation planning process. The degree of consideration and analysis of the factors should be based on the scale and complexity of many issues, including transportation systems development, land use, employment, economic development, human and natural environment, and housing and community development.
- **23 CFR Section 450.208(a)** – In carrying out the statewide transportation planning process, each State shall, at a minimum: 2) Coordinate planning carried out under this subpart with statewide trade and economic development planning activities and related multi-state planning efforts.

■ **TRANPLAN 21 and Other MDT Actions**

TRANPLAN 21 2002 Update

The *TRANPLAN 21 2002 Update* included policy goals and actions demonstrating MDT efforts to support economic development and land use planning efforts in Montana. The development of specific policy statements to better address state and local economic development and land use coordination was a specific emphasis area of *TRANPLAN 21 2002 Update*. The goals were developed through a process involving input from and issues raised by the public, stakeholders, industry representatives, and technical analysis. Generally, these goals are found in the Roadway System Performance, Economic Development, and Access Management and Land Use Planning elements. However, the Public Transportation and Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning elements also support transportation facilities and services to promote and allow for the implementation of economic development and land use planning policies. These goals and actions, by element, are presented below.

Roadway System Performance

- **Policy Goal B** – Preserve mobility for people and industry in Montana.
- **Action B.1** – Establish criteria (goals and guidelines) to determine when to add capacity as part of reconstruction projects.
- **Action B.2** – Establish and prototype a process and guidelines for developing corridor-level strategies that address reconstruction needs.
- **Action B.4** – Inform local planning and development officials of the State’s desire to preserve key transportation corridors, encourage, and assist local jurisdictions to address right-of-way preservation in local land use plans, access management programs, and support MDT objectives for these local transportation corridors.
- **Action B.6** – Develop a Context Sensitive Design toolkit to support project development.

Economic Development

Policy goals from the Economic Development element of the *TRANPLAN 21 2002 Update* are shown below. Action items associated with these policy goals are not presented here but demonstrate MDT’s ongoing compliance with SAFETEA-LU requirements.

- **Policy Goal A** – Preserve the efficient functioning of the transportation system used by Montana’s export-oriented (“basic”) industries to access regional, national, and international markets.
- **Policy Goal B** – Monitor and address capacity needs arising from Montana’s economic growth trends.

- **Policy Goal C** – Support state and local economic development initiatives to maximize new economic opportunities.
- **Policy Goal D** – Support the tourism industry through promoting access to recreational, historical, cultural, and scenic destinations.
- **Policy Goal E** – Develop MDT’s organizational capacity to support economic development.

Access Management

- **Policy Goal A** – Improve corridor level access management to preserve the highway system.
- **Action A.4** – Communicate the performance benefits arising from an access management policy.

Land Use Planning

Policy goals from the Land Use Planning element of the *TRANPLAN 21 2002 Update* are shown below. Action items associated with these policy goals are not presented here but demonstrate MDT’s ongoing compliance with SAFETEA-LU requirements.

- **Policy Goal A** – Provide technical support and leadership to encourage local jurisdictions to support transportation corridor preservation and management through their land use planning and development permitting authority.
- **Policy Goal B** – Consistently apply MDT’s Systems Impact Action Process to ensure developers equitably mitigate their impacts to the highway system.

Public Transportation

Public transportation services in urban and rural areas are often developed in coordination with and in support of land use and economic development planning. Policy goals and action items reflecting this from the *TRANPLAN 21 2002 Update* are presented below.

- **Policy Goal A** – Promote and support increase use of public transportation systems.
- **Action A.2** – Ensure highway improvements address public transportation needs.
- **Action A.3** – Continue to provide state-level funding support for transit by providing a fixed amount of funding for rural transit systems “off the top” of Surface Transportation Program funds, and transfer Urban Highway funds to transit at the request of local governments.
- **Action A.4** – Coordinate state planning, urban area and transit system development planning, and management.

- **Action A.5** – Assist communities to establish transit systems to meet future travel demands.
- **Policy Goal B** – Preserve existing intercity public transportation service and encourage/facilitate the development of new services.
- **Action B.1** – Promote the use, and communicate the availability, of Section 5311(f) funds for intercity passenger service.
- **Action B.2** – Support the provision of intercity bus service through TransADE.
- **Action B.3** – Work to improve intermodal passenger facilities.
- **Action B.4** – Coordinate with Amtrak, the Congressional delegation, and others to facilitate increased use of rail and preserve existing service levels.
- **Policy Goal C** – Work to improve service to social service passengers and the transportation disadvantaged – the elderly, children at risk, low income, and persons with disabilities – through interagency coordination.
- **Action C.1** – Improve state agencies and local provider cooperation in funding coordination.
- **Action C.2** – Use TransADE funding as a medium for improved coordination.
- **Action C.3** – Work with the Public Service Commission to facilitate easier entry into passenger service provision (especially Medicaid transportation).
- **Policy Goal D** – Identify and implement transportation demand management actions that will work in Montana.
- **Action D.2** – Work with other state agencies to develop a transportation demand management program for state government.
- **Action D.3** – Support the implementation of rural ridesharing.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation

In response to increasing public interest in bicycle and pedestrian planning, MDT has increased its focus on planning and project development to specifically address bicycle and pedestrian needs. Many of these efforts have been undertaken jointly with other agencies. Policy goals and action items reflecting this from the *TRANPLAN 21 2002 Update* are presented below.

- **Policy Goal A** – Institutionalize bicycle and pedestrian modes.
- **Action A.1** – Continue the MDT Bicycle and Pedestrian program.

- **Action A.2** – Work with the Department of Commerce to maintain bicycle-related tourist guides and information.
- **Action A.3** – Assist other units of government to provide transportation facilities that encourage or consider use by bicyclists and pedestrians.
- **Policy Goal B** – Target bicycle and pedestrian improvements to account for differences in current and future use.
- **Action B.1** – Identify the most significant bicycle routes designated through metropolitan planning organization and urban area plans and selected rural “touring routes” with the greatest demand or potential demand as the basis for planning and system improvement decisions.
- **Action B.2** – Establish a consistent planning approach and design guidelines for incorporating bicycle and pedestrian facilities into highway improvement projects.
- **Action B.3** – Consider further bicycle and pedestrian improvements based upon proven use or expected future use.
- **Action B.4** – Improve bicycle and pedestrian facilities in Montana through incorporation in existing projects.

Traveler Safety

- **Policy Goal A** – Reduce the number and severity of traffic crashes on Montana’s roadways.
- **Policy Goal B** – Provide leadership and coordinate with other Montana agencies to improve traveler safety.

Other MDT Actions

Currently, MDT coordinates its transportation planning efforts with economic development and land use planning at the state, regional, and local levels. At all levels, MDT coordinates with these other agencies to develop future growth projections and to provide technical support for the transportation element of plans and studies. Financial support and travel demand modeling services are also provided through MDT for urban area transportation plans that guide transportation improvements and spending based on future anticipated growth and needs. MDT historically participates in local transportation committees and conducts a biennial stakeholder survey that includes local governments, representatives from public and private groups affected by commercial and passenger transportation, and economic development interests. Some of these efforts, such as the System Impact Action Process, are directly referenced in *TRANPLAN 21*. Other actions, especially those occurring at the corridor or project level, may not be explicitly included in *TRANPLAN 21* but are built into the MDT planning and design process.

As a result of MDT's economic emphasis documented in the *TRANPLAN 21 2002 Update*, MDT developed additional tools to support the coordination of state, regional, and land use coordination and analysis of economic and land use development decisions that impact the state transportation system. These tools and processes include the Highway Economic Analysis Tool (HEAT) and corridor studies that specifically were designed to assess economic and land use impacts.

Detailed information is presented below about these economic and corridor tools in addition to the System Impact Action Process, MDT's efforts to coordinate with local economic development agencies, and MDT's efforts to consolidate rural transit services in support of economic development.

Highway Economic Analysis Tool (HEAT)

HEAT was developed by MDT to assess the transportation system and cost effectiveness potential of highway capacity expansion improvements of various types across the State. HEAT provides a rigorous analysis capability to evaluate, measure, and compare the effectiveness of corridor capacity, management, and operations enhancements and strategies. Performance or user benefits related to safety (improved crash rates), environmental (reduced emissions), and transportation (reduced delay and improved mobility), among others, are built into HEAT to assess the aggregate economic benefits and benefit/costs of corridor improvements.

HEAT, because its performance and economic analysis models are linked to both statewide economic (Regional Economics Model, Inc. – REMI) and passenger and freight travel demand models, is being used by MDT to assess the future transportation corridor impacts relative to economic growth. Management and operational strategies using HEAT and some aspects of the Performance Planning Process (P³) are being used by MDT to assess economic impacts of management, operational, and capacity improvements to the State's transportation system. For instance, a strategy to improve travel delays and system reliability for a corridor can be evaluated with capital improvement projects or operational strategies. HEAT can be applied to determine the economic and transportation impacts and potential benefits of these strategies and can be used to compare their relative cost effectiveness regarding other strategies within the same corridor or in other corridors. MDT continues to refine and use HEAT to support ongoing transportation planning and policy analysis as part of the Limited Amendment of *TRANPLAN 21* and other statewide and corridor initiatives.

Corridor Studies

TRANPLAN 21 recommends MDT establish and prototype a process and guidelines for developing corridor-level strategies that address reconstruction needs. With this recommendation MDT has initiated corridor-level studies on high-volume or environmentally sensitive facilities to analyze the need for improvements, including cost effective/low-cost corridor management strategies such as TDM, incident and access management strategies, and intersection improvement strategies. This process is used to inform the NEPA /MEPA process and help refine and/or eliminate alternatives to be studied and define the purpose and needs statements used during NEPA/MEPA. The

corridor planning process is anticipated to reduce the cost of the environmental process, speed project delivery, and provide early involvement of regulatory and environmental agencies and other interested parties including the general public. The corridor plans also address broader issues than traditional environmental analysis such as economic and land use planning and socioeconomic conditions and can do so at broader geographic scale. The corridor planning process complements the NEPA/MEPA process and ensures decisions are made at the appropriate level, considers low-cost alternatives, and available funding. MDT will continue to use this corridor planning process to support *TRANPLAN 21* and other state and corridor-specific planning efforts.

System Impact Action Process

MDT's System Impact Action Process (SIAP) provides a coordinated review of projects initiated outside of the agency that may significantly and permanently impact the transportation system as part of the developmental review process. This review process allows MDT to coordinate consistently with local land use agencies, private developers, and/or other governmental agencies when considering requests for access to the transportation system. The *Guide to the System Impact Process*, August 2006, includes general criteria for System Impact Action project determination and an overview of the System Impact Action Process. Goals of the System Impact Action Process include:

- Provide an avenue for private developers to request access to and from the state highway system;
- Facilitate a timely review of the developers request amongst a varied group of MDT Technical offices;
- Identify reasonable accommodation of the developer's project needs;
- Preserve the safety, operational efficiency, and integrity of Montana's transportation system;
- Protect taxpayer investments by recovering costs from developers for their project's impacts to the transportation system; and
- Ensure MDT permitting does not precede an environmental process (NEPA/MEPA).

Upon determination that an access request may have a significant impact on the transportation system, the development plan is entered into the SIAP, which is handled through the MDT Headquarters. Non-significant development requests revert back to the appropriate District office for review and permitting. Review processes that are handled through the SIAP review process are also coordinated with other state, Federal and local agencies before permits are issued.

As of spring 2007, over 450 development projects have been entered into the SIAP review and its use is increasing. Previous versions of *TRANPLAN 21*, including the 2002 update, contain policy goals and action items to ensure that private development, equitably, contributes to the maintenance and appropriate improvements to the state's

transportation system. The SIAP, developed with this direction, continues to provide MDT with a coordinated review process which protects taxpayer resources and allows for new development in accordance with local land use planning decisions and environmental regulations.

Coordination With Economic Development

The Montana Economic Developers Association (MEDA) is an association of economic development professionals, consisting of members/employees of the private and public sectors. The MEDA promotes and fosters economic development activities in the State of Montana. MDT has established an ongoing cooperative relationship with MEDA and its primary state partner, the Montana Department of Commerce (MDOC), to facilitate interagency involvement through conferences, mailings, and regular communication. As part of the Limited Amendment of *TRANPLAN 21*, MDT is working with the MEDA Transportation Group and MDOC to discuss plan amendments and further coordination between the groups. This working group provides MDT with an opportunity to share information with and solicit ideas from local and state agencies. Key items from this meeting included:

- Continue regular meeting of the MEDA/DOC/MDT working group to share information and offer forums for new ideas;
- Explore opportunities to use other economic development or local government groups such as the Certified Regional Development Corporations (CRDCs) as a channel for regional economic and land use oriented outreach activities;
- Provide resources to and work with local officials through meetings and workshops to increase knowledge of transportation system needs and requirements using portfolios of current and expected future transportation system characteristics, impacts, and statistics;
- Provide training, analysis tools, or technical support to help local governments meet these requirements;
- Solicit local governments for and consider and evaluate their suggestions for research topics, corridor plans, and other areas of joint interest; and
- Work with local governments and other agencies to develop a plan for and jointly maintain rest stops and other traveler facilities in the State of Montana.

MDT has also joined efforts with other economic development agencies across the state at the corridor level. In Northeastern Montana, the *U.S. 2/MT 16 Transportation Regional Economic Development (TRED) Study*, the Great Northern Development Corporation was contracted to aid MDT as a local agent by participating in an expert panel that reviewed the study, identifying and briefing people with local and industry-specific expertise, and assisting with local public involvement activities. This and other joint efforts arose from MDT's recognition that growth in many rural parts of the state is industrially driven and

thus, appropriate consideration of economic, employment, and trade patterns should be represented in the transportation planning process.

Public Transportation and Consolidated Service Model

In Montana, public transportation services in rural areas and cities with populations under 50,000 are provided by 29 urban and rural transit systems and public transportation services provided by health and human service organizations. Population trends suggest that the state's overall population growth will remain moderate in scale and uneven between the state's regions. Relatively high growth is expected in and around most of the state's larger cities and in the high amenity areas in the western part of the state. Low-to-negative population growth has been the prevailing pattern in the eastern part of the state. It is also projected that the aged population will grow faster than that in the U.S. as a whole. These factors are examples of economic development, human environment, and community development factors which are contributing to the growing importance of public transportation in Montana.

The State of Montana received a substantial increase in Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5311 Non-urbanized Area Formula Funds in SAFETEA-LU. Section 5311 funds can be used for planning, capital, operating, and administration assistance in non-urbanized areas with populations of less than 50,000. The state of Montana does not provide matching funds for Federal transit funds. However, local transit providers can use Federal Health and Human Services funds that are already being spent in their communities to match FTA funds. In light of these conditions, MDT requires that, wherever possible, Section 5311 applicants not only coordinate, but also develop a consolidated service model. This effort to consolidate services is unique to Montana. Various other states (e.g., New Mexico, Arizona) are trying to develop similar programs to consolidate rural transit services. Methods for consolidation include contracts or MOUs at a local level. Developing consolidated services allow transit operators to aggregate and leverage their funding to create more efficient and effective transit systems, increasing accessibility to public transportation throughout Montana.

■ Review of Local and Regional Growth Plans

SAFETEA-LU requires that the statewide transportation planning processes promote consistency between transportation improvements and state and local planned growth and economic development patterns. A review of local and regional growth plans was conducted to assess the level of consideration given to these factors in existing planning processes.

MDT staff responsible for implementing elements of *TRANPLAN 21* and associated tools (HEAT, Corridor Studies) related to economic development and land use provided detailed land use and socioeconomic information for all regions of the state. Based on this information, regions of the state were selected to provide a representative diversity of land use and development trends across the state. The selected regions highlight the variability of economic and population trends and different levels of local planning for

planned growth and economic development in Montana. Policies were also selected to reflect differences between urban and rural planning processes. The following policies were included in this review:

- The city of Bozeman and Gallatin County, which represents a high growth, urban area in western Montana. The *Bozeman 2020 Community Plan*, *Gallatin County Growth Policy*, and *Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy* for Gallatin and Park Counties for the Northern Rocky Mountain RC&D area were included in this review.
- Ravalli County, which represents a high amenity, high growth area in western Montana. The *Ravalli County Growth Policy* was included in this review.
- Great Falls and Billings, which represent moderately-paced growth, metropolitan areas. The *Great Falls Growth Policy* and *Yellowstone County and City of Billings 2003 Growth Policy Plan* were included in this review.
- The Bear Paw Economic Development District includes Blaine, Chouteau, Hill, Liberty, and Phillips Counties, as well as the Fort Belknap and Rocky Boy's Indian Reservations. This region is representative of the pattern of slow and negative growth seen in much of eastern and northeastern Montana. The *Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)* for this region was included in this review.

As shown in Table 1, the local and regional growth policies reviewed vary in the detail and direction associated with transportation and economic and land use growth. Of the policies reviewed, only those of Great Falls and Bozeman include discussions about the relationship between transportation and land use and only Great Falls incorporates this relationship into the goals and action items of the plan's growth policy. Although one of the guiding principles in the Bozeman policy is related to this topic, the linkage is not reflected in the resulting goals and action items. The two CEDS plans reviewed include very little discussion about transportation which is limited to accessibility as a strength or weakness. The rural or fringe area policies generally include less detail about the transportation system and weaker connections between transportation and land use than those documented for urban policies.

As part of this limited amendment of *TRANPLAN 21*, MDT met with representatives from MEDA and the MDOC to discuss interagency coordination. As part of this discussion, it was proposed that MDT assemble a toolkit of analysis techniques applicable to regional and local planning and provide support for local governments about transportation requirements in the land development process. To further facilitate consistency in the incorporation of transportation in long-range land use and economic development planning, when resources permit, MDT will provide guidance on land use and transportation linkages and work with local and regional agencies to incorporate this relationship into goals, policies, and action items.

Table 1 Review of Local and Regional Growth Policies

Jurisdiction	Document Reviewed	Transportation Discussion	Transportation Focus	Transportation Goals/ Policies/Objectives/Actions
Bear Paw Economic Development District	<i>Bearpaw Development Corporation of Northern Montana Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, 2006 Update</i>	<p>Perceived threats to the economy of the district:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public transportation; Lack of transportation infrastructure or infrastructure maintenance; and Transportation costs. 	Strategic Direction – To ensure access to affordable, accessible, and convenient transportation for low-income individuals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Goal III – Maintain and enhance the physical infrastructure of the District. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Item 19: Bear Paw staff will continue to provide project planning assistance and program administration of the Community Transportation Enhancement Program (CTEP) for 8 of its member governments.... Goal VI – Continually provide economic development planning services to District members. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Item 7: Bear Paw staff will facilitate the development and updating of a Transit Coordination Plan (TCP) for the Liberty County Council on Ageing, which is Liberty County’s only provider of public transportation service....
Northern Rocky Mountain RC&D	<i>Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for Gallatin and Park Counties, Spring 2006</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Description of existing transportation system. Access to transportation routes included as an area strength. 	n/a	n/a
Gallatin County	<i>Gallatin County Growth Policy, April 2003</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public Services – Roadway Maintenance. 	n/a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mobility and Circulation Goal 1 – Provide a Safe and Efficient Transportation System.
Ravalli County	<i>Ravalli County Growth Policy, amended August 2004</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public Facilities and Services: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Roads and bridges classification and maintenance; Financial contribution; Ravalli County TAC; Five-year long-range plan; 	n/a	n/a

Jurisdiction	Document Reviewed	Transportation Discussion	Transportation Focus	Transportation Goals/ Policies/Objectives/Actions
		and – Transit service providers.		
Yellowstone County/City of Billings	<i>Yellowstone County and City of Billings 2003 Growth Policy Plan, 2003</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transportation included as a potential factor impacting natural resources. • Description of existing transportation system and planning process. • Existing Transportation Plan and 1995 BikeNet Plan referenced. • Discussion of TSM Management Strategies. • Discussion on Rural Transportation and Air Quality. 	n/a	<p>The following goals and associated objectives relate to the transportation system.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safe traffic speeds consistent with the surrounding uses. • Safe and efficient traffic circulation around and through the City. • Lack of adequate traffic control. • Visually appealing rights-of-way that serve the needs of all users. • A safe and efficient transportation system characterized by convenient connections and steady traffic flow. • City streets and County roads maintained at safe standards. • Rational consideration of all City neighborhoods and County town sites when allocating transportation improvement funds. • Reduced traffic congestion in Billings. • Well maintained network of safe and interconnected sidewalks. • Increased circulation connections for improved traffic flow. • Improve quality of County subdivision roads.

Jurisdiction	Document Reviewed	Transportation Discussion	Transportation Focus	Transportation Goals/ Policies/Objectives/Actions
Bozeman	<i>Bozeman 2020 Community Plan</i> , October 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Description of existing transportation system and planning process. • In depth discussion on the linkages between transportation and land use. • Existing Transportation Plan referenced. • Discussion of TDM Strategies. • Assessment of future capacity and demand. 	Guiding Principle – This community plan is designed to realize interrelated goals for land use, housing, transportation, air quality, and other areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goal 10.8.1 Transportation System – Maintain and enhance the functionality to the transportation system. • Goal 10.8.2 – Ensure that a variety of travel options exist which allow safe, logical, and balanced transportation choices. • Goal 10.8.3 – Encourage transportation options that reduce resource consumption, increase social interaction, support safe neighborhoods, and increase the ability of the existing transportation facilities to accommodate a growing city. • 10.8.4 Pathways – Establish and maintain an integrated system of transportation and recreational pathways, including bicycle and pedestrian trails, neighborhood parks, green belts, and open space.
Great Falls	<i>Great Falls Growth Policy: A Greater Great Falls – Plan on It!</i> , adopted June 2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Description of existing transportation system and planning process. • Discussion of the linkages between transportation and land use. • Existing Transportation Plan referenced. • TSM & TDM Strategies. • Discussion of freight and safety issues. 	The residents of the Great Falls area desire a safe, efficient transportation system that includes all types of motorized and non-motorized transportation modes and facilities.	<p>The following goals are intended to reflect the community “vision”:</p> <p>Provide a safe, efficient, accessible, and cost-effective transportation system that offers viable choices for moving people and goods throughout the community.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make transit and non-motorized modes of transportation viable alternatives to the private automobile for travel in and around the community. • Provide an open public involvement process in the development of the transportation system and in the implementation of transportation improvements to assure that community standards and values, such as aesthetics and neighborhood protection, are incorporated.

Source: Cambridge Systematics, June 2007.

■ Draft *TRANPLAN 21* Policy Amendments

Existing MDT actions and components of *TRANPLAN 21 2002 Update* are already in compliance with SAFETEA-LU requirements. The following amendments are recommended to better reflect changes in existing conditions since the *TRANPLAN 21 2002 Update* and to strengthen MDT compliance with SAFETEA-LU requirements.

Roadway System Performance

The following policy goal in the Roadway System Performance should be amended to reflect current and future funding constraints:

- **Policy Goal B** – Preserve mobility for people and industry in Montana within available resources.

In addition, the supporting text for the following action item should be modified to include:

- **Action B.6** – Develop a Context Sensitive Design toolkit to support project development.

MDT will use this toolkit to guide incorporation of Context Sensitive Design elements into projects, as appropriate.

Economic Development

Revise the following actions and append existing supporting text:

- **Action B.2** – Identify and address deficiencies in the strategic transportation network to prepare for the future of transportation need in Montana.

This action encourages the continued communication and coordination with leaders of growth industries and local governments. MDT will continue to participate in and support interagency working groups similar to that with MEDA and the DOC and use them as a continuous and cooperative forum for early identification of transportation system needs throughout the state.

- **Action C.1** – Continue to support business retention, recruiting, and other related activities of the Governor’s Office of Economic Development, MEDA, CRDCs, and the DOC.

The action item has been expanded to include, not only the Governor’s Office of Economic Development, but also MEDA, CRDCs, and the DOC.

- **Action C.3** – Continue to coordinate with and provide support to local economic development initiatives.

MDT will work to develop a “toolkit” of MDT processes for new development to local governments. The toolkit will include information on access management, site

distance, and congestion processes and analysis tools for traffic studies. In conjunction, MDT will continue to provide transportation planning expertise and support in local economic development initiatives. Upon request, MDT will also work with local governments to provide workshops or training sessions on available transportation tools.

- **Action C.5** – Consider the findings in the *Montana Air Service Opportunities and Challenges* in addressing the cost, frequency, and reliability for out-of-state air travel.

This action item has been updated to reflect completion and encourage consideration of elements contained in the *Montana Air Service Opportunities and Challenges*, in February 2007.

Access Management

Revise Access Management Action A.4 to read:

- **Action A.4** – Work with local governments to incorporate access management strategies their transportation plans and permitting processes to preserve accessibility and mobility along arterial corridors.

This action addresses the need to continue to educate and provide support to regional and local planning agencies to encourage the incorporation of transportation planning policies and actions into their planning processes and to ensure their consistency with statewide transportation plans. This effort will be coordinated with Economic Development Action C.3.

If the *MDT Access Management Manual*, *1999 Access Management Project final report*, or *Access Management Plan* have been updated or completed, the following action items should be revised to reflect this change in status:

- **Action A.1.** – Establish an MDT Access Management Manual.
- **Action A.2** – Develop and implement approach standards as identified in the 1999 Access Management Project final report.
- **Action A.3** – Establish an Access Management Plan that identified and helps preserve priority corridors.

Land Use Planning

The language of the following Land Use Planning action item should be amended to note the value of local jurisdiction input when identifying study areas for the corridor planning process:

- **Action A.2** – Work with local jurisdictions in the early identification of urban and rural corridors under development pressure.

MDT will also consider local jurisdiction input when selecting areas for study through the corridor planning process.

The language of the following Land Use Planning action item should be revised to reflect development and inclusion of an environmental checklist into the System Impact Action Process:

- **Action B.2** – Explore and develop tools to equitably distribute improvement costs on developing corridors regardless of sequencing of the developments.

Public Transportation

The following revisions to public transportation action items should be made to reflect changes in policies and programs:

- **Action A.3** – Transfer urban highway funds to transit at the request of local governments.

It is no longer necessary to provide STP funds due to the significant increase in FTA funding.

- **Action A.5** – Continue to assist communities to establish consolidated transit systems to meet future travel demands.

In an effort to assist communities in leveraging available funding to maximize efficiency and effectiveness of their transit systems, MDT requires applicants for transit funding to submit consolidated transit plans. This encourages agencies to access and use Federal health and human services to match funds and provide enhanced service quality for areas previously covered by overlapping providers. All providers must submit consolidated plans.

- **Action B.1** – Promote the use of, and communicate the availability of Section 5311(f) funds for intercity passenger service.

The text accommodating this action item should be revised to encourage local coordination and increased regional coordination of intercity and rural transit. Specifically, the text should address leveraging existing interagency forums with economic development agencies, to develop such services.

- **Action B.2** – Support the provision of intercity bus service through TransADE.

A revision to this action item has not been included at this time but should be considered to reflect recent legislation (SB160) allowing transit funds for use as Federal match.

- **Policy Goal C** – Work to improve service to social service passengers and the transportation disadvantaged – the elderly, children at risk, low income, and persons with disabilities – through facilitating interagency funding consolidation.

MDT has increased its efforts on this policy goal from encouraging interagency coordination to requiring the development of interagency consolidated plans. These plans consolidate interagency funds to better leverage overlapping resources to improve service to the transportation disadvantaged.

- **Action C.1** – Improve state agencies and local provider cooperation in funding consolidation.
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Consolidation of local funds, rather than coordination, through contract agreements or MOUs/MOAs, allows local operating agencies to leverage available resources.

- **Action C.3** – Continue to work with the Public Service Commission to facilitate easier entry into passenger service provision (especially Medicaid transportation).

The initial intent of this action item was achieved with the passing of HB 273 by the 2005 legislature which removed barriers to entry. The intent of this revised action item is to ensure that similar or new obstacles do not arise.

- **Action D.3** – Support the implementation of rural ridesharing.

This action item has not been revised. However, the accommodating text should be amended to include the use of consolidated plans to support implementation of rural ridesharing.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning

MDT has recently devoted resources to support the Safe Routes to School Program that is designed to encourage and enable more children to safely walk and bike to school and to better address statewide bicycle and pedestrian programming for kindergarten through grade 8 children. The following revisions to bicycle and pedestrian actions should be made to incorporate elements of the Safe Routes to School Program and to reflect changes in MDT policies in the Limited Amendment of *TRANPLAN 21*:

- **Action A.6** – Encourage the implementation of bicycle and pedestrian safety efforts in the vicinity of k-8 schools through the Safe Routes to School Program.

The Safe Routes to School Program supports infrastructure and behavioral projects that encourage bicycle and pedestrian projects in the vicinity of schools. The intent of this action is to encourage use of not only infrastructure improvements but educational, encouragement and enforcement programs in schools and communities to increase awareness of bicycle and pedestrian safety.

- **Action B.1** – Identify the most significant bicycle routes designated through metropolitan planning organization and urban area plans and selected rural “touring routes” with the greatest demand or potential demand as the basis for planning and system improvement decisions.

Change the action statement to show an end result. Does simply identifying the routes do anything, or is additional action needed, such as incorporating features in projects, increasing public awareness, etc. I don’t know – this depends on what MDT wants to do.

- **Action B.4** – Improve bicycle and pedestrian facilities in Montana through incorporation in existing projects.

The language following Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning Action B.4 should be amended to reflect changes since the implementation of the Safe Routes to School Program. Specifically, as a result of implementing the selected Safe Routes to School Projects, MDT has increased its coordination with local communities. MDT also encourages coordination with CTEP bicycle and pedestrian planning efforts.
